**Day 1**

So, eight hundred years old. Is this the end? A beginning? Unlike most others who reach the age of Wandering I am able to approach it with more calm. I have escorted others to their new lives as Wanderers and had hints of fates that are not as cruel as many imagine. One of my points of pride was to ease the fears about to begin their journey, to convince them that Rafiel would guide them. I know that this must be true and have seen some evidence that it is so.

Yet I am still apprehensive.

At first I feared that the Death Shamans would not be handing me over to the Life Shamans but rather to the White Shamans. While I never rose above the ranks of the Colorless I saw, by accident, that which is reserved for the White and Radiant. The Chamber of Spheres, Rafiel’s most holy of places. White and Radiant Shamans do not become Wanderers because of this knowledge - they are put to death for what they have seen.

Once I was handed over to the LIfe Shamans to complete my journey there was some relief that my life was not at its end but now there was the fear of the future. The path that so many Wanderers follow... could I take it? I was unsure. I was not of the Second Shadow so sneaking to the surface was not in my future so that left...

As I sit here not far from the tunnel where the White Shamans performed their final ceremony and released me to my fate I don’t like to think about it. Is it better to wander aimlessly, alone, or to abide with monsters? I shall sleep and think about it.

**Day 2**

I had a dream last night. At first I thought it was Rafiel coming to give me guidance. But it was not him, at least I do not think it was. He was old and a human of all things. Why I should be dreaming of such a person I do not know - I never spent much time New Enclave with the adopted outlanders. I certainly never recall having seen this old man before. He approached me, his wizardly robes seemingly made of some sort of red energy, and said, “You shall set things in motion, Velerar. The world above is spinning out of control and even your people shall be engulfed in foolishness. My people may lose their war. Even I may cease to exist. Bring me closer to Rafiel, Velerar. Set the wheels turning.”

Even with my years of study and reflection I could not make anything of it. It seemed to be of singular importance, though, so I shall reflect upon it. I certainly shall have the time on my hands!

I have decided to wander freely and alone for now. Rafiel guide me.

**Day 12**

Endless wandering. I am forbidden to retrace my tracks. I suppose some simpletons end up in a dead end and die staring at a wall. Smarter ones just retrace back to the previous junction and follow the law in spirit. Powerful old Shamans like me just shape new tunnels so that I can obey the law in both word and spirit. Ha!

**Day 14**

Bumped into some boneless. Even though they’re no threat to me they still give me the creeps. Perhaps they were Rafiel’s way of punishing me for setting down such uncharitable thoughts about other Wanderers.

**Day 27**

Over a month now. I’ve been keeping to the tunnels near the Shadowlands, but somehow it doesn’t feel right. I know many Wanderers lurk about the edges of our homelands, but eventually you run out of untrodden paths. Perhaps I should just get it over with and go deeper? Or perhaps I should take a sightseeing tour? That sounds fun. I’m eight hundred years old. I’ve earned a vacation!

**Day 32**

I have traveled west from the City of the Stars. I’ve gazed upon Old Firemouth many times as it is so close by, but never from this angle. Looking up from the Crater of Sethandor it looks enormous!

**Day 40**

South now. Sitting atop the Tower of Bathadia, looking down upon the Forest of Spiders. It looks so beautiful from up here, the luminescent light reflecting off the webs. Patterns within patterns that form patterns unto themselves. I could meditate on this for days. However the soldiers are shouting at me to come down from the roof. “Respect your elders!” Oh, they didn’t like that.

**Day 43**

Further south. Looking down on the Mylandiel Hills from Durfyn’s Belfry. I think I’ll follow them down through the Trail of Galadria to the Larith Peaks. I’ve always wanted to see them.

**Day 50**

Should have packed more food for that trip. Good thing some miners were willing to share with an old Wanderer. The few people I meet are so generous.

**Day 51**

The Larith Peaks weren’t all that impressive. Maybe the Moonleaf Woods will be prettier. Eastward it is.

**Day 56**

It’s a very pretty mushroom forest, but I was hoping for something more... overlandish. I’ve never seen an actual tree, but I understand that is where the term “wood” and “leaf” come from in “Moonleaf Wood”. Not sure what a “moon” is, either. Always odd when outlander naming conventions are used. Ah well, further east.

**Day 69**

Ugh. Caves and quarries. So dull. Two weeks of it, nonetheless. I’m glad to have come out here in the Darkwood. I can see Red Rock Bellows smouldering in the distance. I might go take a closer look and slip up north along Shyrdiel’s Way. It’s a bit of a major tunnel for a Wanderer to take, but who’s counting?

**Day 78**

I’m sorry. I’m sorry. I shall not take the easy way again, Rafiel. It is never pleasant to kill your own brethren, but they are desperate here in the Reaches of Salandia. The proximity of our above ground cousins may also have an effect. But still, Shadow Elf should never kill Shadow Elf. Even in self defense. I have not drawn blood like this in centuries and I pray Rafiel never makes me do so again.

I am so sorry.

**Day 88**

I’ve headed north. Nothing but the Desert of Lost Souls was to the west. At the moment I am overlooking Rastinga from the mountains. Looks like a nice little town. A pity I cannot visit them. I’ve been feeling lonely lately. I think I’ll head northwest to Alfmyr. It is a good place to think.

**Day 92**

I must tread reverently. The souls of my ancestors and my descendants reside in these crystals. Alfmyr is a sacred city with a sacred duty, and I shall respect them. The miners I pass are also friendly - I’m sure many Wanderers pass this way. I’ll take my time and pay my respects.

**Day 104**

North and west to the boiling lake. So relaxing. I may stay here awhile and inch along my path. The steam baths will help sooth my tired feet.

**Day 111**

Fire Dragon Mountain. I hope he never awakens. The erupting volcano would be bad enough!

Northward. I haven’t been to New Grunland for while.

**Day 119**

Larkpoint Castle still gives me the creeps. Still, it gives me a good view of Jelden. The molded mushroom buildings have always looked so pretty to me. And for some reason I feel so much more connected to the souls of my ancestors and descendants while here. I may linger some more before heading Northwest.

**Day 126**

Thulingard. So pretty. A perfect layer of stonegraze and mushrooms from cavern wall to cavern wall. New Grunland used to be like this until the Irus dried up. Maybe I should investigate the falls there and see if I can get the water flowing again. Ha! That would show them when a Wanderer can do. Let’s see if I can tunnel further west.

**Day 132**

Lake Caerlinyl. I guess I should be impressed but all the sand that surrounds it. For some reason I’m not. Let’s go south.

**Day 136**

Bethandor Cave.

**Day 143**

Oakstar Woods. Why do they use these stupid overland names? It’s fungus. There is no wood.

**Day 148**

The Cearilan Wastes. Exciting as it sounds.

**Day 157**

Efreet’s Claws. I’ve seen enough volcanos.

**Day 166**

Not sure where else to go. I don’t have my map and I don’t know any more landmarks from memory. I guess it’s time to wander. Better load up on food.

**Day 179**

More tunnels. I’ve had to stoneshape twice to get out of a dead end.

**Day 224**

I’ve been wandering tunnels. Not dead yet.

**Day 289?**

Still not dead.

**Day 332**

So bored. Why can’t that crazy human come to my dreams again? That was interesting. I still don’t understand what he was saying. Probably means he was an immortal.

Time to go deeper.

**Day 394**

Found an old corpse of another Wanderer leaning against the wall of a dead end. Dumbass.

**Day 422**

I’m running low on food. I haven’t seen a mushroom for over a week and it keeps getting warmer. Somehow I feel I’m on the right track, though. Am I nearing the fabled City of Wanderers? I know I shouldn’t fantasize about such childish nonsense - I was a Colorless Shaman after all. But some hope would be nice right about now.

**Day 425**

What hell is this? This is no city of Wanderers! The construction looks like that of our ancestral brethren who worshipped foul powers in the darkness, the Aengemorians. But there are no elves here, only foul beasts like orcs, goblins and trolls. And as if to mock me, they speak in a twisted and foul dialect of our own tongue! Oenkmar, they call this place. They can’t even pronounce it’s name correctly - Aengemor.

I think I would have been happier if the legend of the City of Wanderers had simply been a fairy tale and not been based on any sort of half truth. There is a city here, in a place where a Wanderer who survives long enough is sure to reach eventually. But why would Rafiel guide us to such a place? I can disguise myself easily with magics but what sort of life would I live? How can I follow the laws of the Refuge Stone among such monsters? This cannot be my final destination, can it?

My fear is that this may have once been a destination for the Wanderers. The ancient elven construction hints at this. But for how long have Wanderers been coming not to a city of welcoming elves but to a den of beasts? What cruel fate has Rafiel allowed us to suffer?

For now I am lurking in the shadows outside the city. I need food and am unsure of what to do next. I shall take what I need, to be sure, but then what? I am in hostile land and I fear Rafiel has forsaken me.

**Day 427**

Wanderers! They do exist down here! Apparently they have formed an enclave here within Oenkmar. It looks like Rafiel has indeed guided me. They have taken me in. I need rest.

**Day 428**

I was wondering how I could live in this city without retracing my steps. It seems the other Wanderers here don’t worry about that. I dare say they don’t worry much at all about the Refuge Stone. The impression I have is that they think Rafiel has forsaken them. They know I was a Colorless, though, so they’re keeping their mouths shut about that.

Kesenel was apparently a wizard she’s lived to a spry nine hundred years. She keeps the Enclave safe and hidden, helping those without magic ways to disguise themselves so that they can move about without spreading suspicion. Of course, very few without magic make it this far! She’s confided that the Wanderers here have indeed forsaken the Refuge Stone, but not Rafiel! According to her, this is a new phase in our lives with new duties. Of those I will learn later. For now, I need to rest more.

**Day 429**

Rafiel, you sly god! What are your intentions here?

I now know the fate of the deformed children we leave in the caves. While some may indeed die, it seems as if many are placed specifically to be found by wandering goblins and such. That is why I had to make such perilous journeys with infants as a Death Shaman. These humanoids find these deformed children and take them as their own! This city is filled with Shadow Elves, many of whom do not even know it. Part of what the Wanderers do here is track them down and teach them the truth.

But to what use? What child would choose to help a people who abandoned them in the caves? When I ask Kesenel about this she says that many do spurn our advances... but the truth eats at them. Eventually they come around with more questions and we both have the time.

I cannot tell if Rafiel’s plan is madness or genius.

**Day 430**

Another of our duties - spreading hatred towards the dwarves. Apparently some Second Shadow Wanderers have decided that inciting the humanoids against the Dwarves will keep both of them away from the Shadowlands. It seems logical, but is it the right thing to do? I hold nothing against the dwarves. I need to think about this.

**Day 467**

I’ve spent a month here now. Somehow I don’t feel at peace. Kesenel says that feeling will come, but I don’t know. I don’t feel this is what I’m destined for. I feel like I’m forgetting something.

**Day 485**

Perhaps Kesenel is worth staying for.

**Day 642**

Can I find no peace? Am I cursed for some action or sin? We were discovered and the mobs came with their torches and swords. While we are old, powerful and crafty we are not numerous. Kesenel’s last words were an order for us to all scatter and reunite elsewhere in the city.

I’m sorry, love, but there is nothing here for me now.

**Day 659**

Down, down down. I feel drawn. A humming. I feel like I’m heading for home even though I am heading farther away.

**Day 667**

My bearings tell me I am somewhere beneath New Grunland. A large cavern is nearby. A cavern with a familiar humming. Tomorrow I shall stoneshape through.

**Day 668**

Rafiel. What is this? What are you doing?

The cavern I entered was dominated by a large, metallic building. I think. It looked unlike anything I had ever seen before. There were lights and the humming. I was immediately struck with a wave of soul power and for a moment almost forgot how to protect myself. Even with my wards up it was unlike anything I have ever felt. If I let my guard down for a moment I would be dead, cooked from the inside out.

I advanced upon the building and observed the writing along the sides. My magics translated it as, “H.M.S.S. Beagle.” So this was a ship? Where were the sails?

A metal ramp lead to an opening inside and it was even stranger. Metal walls, ceilings and floors with lights from what must have been magical sources in the ceiling. Doors without handles. Small sections of walls covered with flashing lights and odd devices. It was like a maze for a while, both in terms of navigation and of understanding. What was this place?

I eventually found the source of the humming. An open set of doors led to a massive chamber where a large metallic sphere with lights emitting from glass windows hung suspended. I looked in one of the windows and had my world turned upside down.

It looked exactly like the Chamber of Spheres! Only this was somewhat smaller and completed. The crystal matrix shone much more brightly and was much more condensed. But there was no mistake, this was a complete version of what the White and Radiant Shamans were building on the sixth floor of the temple.

My shock caused me to temporarily drop my defenses and I felt my body burn in agony. While it wasn’t fatal, I knew that I would not have much longer for this life. We were always warned that too much exposure the power of souls would warp and even burn the body.

Souls? Were they really souls? Or was this yet another one of Rafiel’s lies? These crystals definitely contained power and he wanted them treated with reverence. What better way than to tell us they contained the souls of our families? And if that was a lie...

Before I could think too much more about it the lights dimmed and windows in the walls of the chamber lit up. Faces appeared in the windows, faces of humans and some elves dressed in the robes of wizards. They began to speak to one another.

“This is a quick meeting I have requested.” Not a human, a skeleton! Dressed as a wizard. A lich then. “It is about the Alphatian agent that we recently uncovered.”

Another human with dark hair spoke. “What have you discovered from him? Did he learn anything about us?”

“No,” the lich replied. “And he didn’t get a chance to report, either. I made sure of that. I did get some interesting information from him, though. YOU might be interested.”

The lich seemed to be motioning to an old human... the man from the dream! His face was there, just like I remembered. “Indeed? And what did you find. You certainly seem pleased about it. Must be embarrassing.”

“There is another agent who has infiltrated your faculty.” The lich chortled. “You need to do a better job screening your hires.”

“Oh, I know about him. He’s a good chap!” The others looked incredulous. “I mean that. He’s loyal to Alphatia, of course, but I don’t think he’ll do anything to cause harm once he settles in. He may be useful to feed false information through.”

“I see.” A female elf. She looked odd, though. “Make sure no one outside of us funds out. If the council discovered this you’d lose your little friend.”

“Of course. I would expect no less. Anything else or shall we continue to needlessly expose ourselves to Radiance for a little longer?”

The others nodded and the faces disappeared. The old man, though, he seemed to linger and look right at me! The the lights brightened back up.

I understood little of that but I did understand one thing. The Radiance. That is what they call our souls. Or perhaps it is our souls that are actually this Radiance? Or not souls. Just... power. Power that we both used but apparently they better understood.